

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the first paragraph on page 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Reference is made to commonly assigned, co-pending U.S.

Patent Applications:

Publication Number 2003/0099815-by Dontula et al., (~~Docket 82056~~) filed of even date herewith entitled “Ethoxylated Alcohol Intercalated Smectite Materials and Method”;

Publication Number 2003/0100655 by Nair et al., (~~Docket 82858~~) filed of even date herewith entitled “Polyester Nanocomposites”, and

Publication Number 2003/1418918 by Dontula et al., (~~Docket 82859~~) filed of even date herewith entitled “Article Utilizing Block Copolymer Intercalated Clay”, the disclosures of which are incorporated herein.--